

# The Library Assistant :

*The Official Journal of the Library Assistants' Association.*

No. 247.

DECEMBER, 1918.

Published Monthly.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The next Meeting will be held at the Central Library for Students, 20, Tavistock Square, W.C., at 3 o'clock, on the afternoon of Wednesday, 11th December.

Mr. A. Ramage, Organising Secretary, London University Tutorial Classes, will open a Discussion on "**The Public Library's Contribution to Adult Education and Social Welfare.**"

In view of the importance of this subject, it is hoped that there will be a good attendance, not only of librarians, but of others interested in education and social warfare.

A vacancy on the London side of the Council will be filled at this meeting. Nominations should reach the Hon. Secretary not later than Saturday, 7th December.

## EDITORIAL.

**Our Journal.**—Owing to the increased cost of production, we regret to announce a further temporary curtailment in the size of *The Library Assistant*, commencing with the present issue. It is hoped to enlarge the journal to eight pages within a few months, and to revert to our pre-war standard at no far distant date. In the meantime, the Council is of opinion, that it is better to carry on with a small journal published at frequent intervals, rather than with a larger one published quarterly. May we remind readers that by paying their subscriptions promptly, they are helping towards a more speedy return to normal conditions.

**The Season's Greetings.**—Consequent upon the events that have happened since our last number appeared, we are able to do what we have not been able to do for several years past, viz. to wish our readers a very happy Christmas. We can further hope with confidence that before we have entered far into the new year many of our colleagues, of whose services we are justly proud, will have returned to our midst.

**The Austin Memorial.**—More than £800 has already been subscribed towards a memorial to the late Miss E. W. Austin, librarian of the National Library for the Blind. The Council of the L.A.A. has forwarded a small contribution as a token of appreciation of her interest in our work.

**Our Album of Honour.**—We are anxious that the Association's Album of Honour shall be completed at an early date so that it may be on exhibition at our next annual meeting. May we request that all material shall reach us not later than 31st March next? It is desired that the Album shall contain the portrait of every librarian and library assistant who has taken an active part in the Great War. We particularly ask for the co-operation of readers in securing portraits of every man who has fallen in the service of his country. We also hope immediately to undertake the compilation of a complete Roll of Honour.

**The Library in Industry.**—We regret that at the moment we are unable to publish a short article by the librarian of the Dunlop Rubber Co.'s Works Library, in continuation of Miss Stubbs' contribution, which appeared in our July issue. The writer is of opinion that such libraries should be administered by a trained librarian, and that public library authorities should grant the works librarian unrestricted use of their libraries, at any rate until such time as adequate commercial or technical libraries are provided. The writer further ventures the statement that "it is because the public library by its conservative methods has failed adequately to supply the wants of the manufacturer that works libraries have originated."

**The Aberystwyth Summer School.**—Miss Wragg, of Sheffield, has written for us an interesting account of the recent Summer School at Aberystwyth, from which we gather that it was again a distinct success. The School was held from 29th July to 10th August, and was attended by about 30 students. The lectures and lecturers were as follows:—Bibliography (Mr. H. Thomas, D. Litt.), Classification (Mr. L. S. Jast), Cataloguing (Mr. H. Guppy, M.A.), Library History, Foundation and Equipment (Mr. J. Hutt, M.A.), Commercial and Technical Libraries (Mr. S. A. Pitt), Archives (Mr. H. Hall, F.S.A.), Library Work with Children (Messrs. J. Ballinger, M.A., and L. S. Jast), Bookbinding (Mr. C. Hanson).

**Resignation of Miss Darling from the Council.**—We regret to announce that Miss Darling, of Chelsea, has resigned her seat on the Council, and desire to record our thanks for the support she has always accorded to the Association's work. Miss Darling may be assured of the best wishes of her colleagues on the Council and of the members generally for her future.

**A New Book.**—Readers will be interested to know that Mr. R. G. Williams, of Bolton, acting honorary secretary of our North-Western Branch, has in the press "A Manual of Book Selection for the Librarian and Book Lover." As its early

publication depends upon the measure of the support it receives from the profession, we take the liberty of announcing it in our pages. The price will be 6s. net.

**Post Required.**—A member of the Association discharged from Military Service (without physical disability) seeks a library position in or near London; age 24, with several years' experience in a progressive provincial city library, of which he is temporarily in charge; salary required—about £150 p.a. Applications should be addressed in the first instance to the Hon. Secretary, Bromley Library, Brnnswick Road, Poplar, E.14.

**The Interests of the Public Library Assistant.**—The November General Meeting consisted of a discussion on "The After War Interests of the Public Library Assistant." Presuming a readiness to make themselves efficient in the service of the community, the opener dealt first with the salaries question from the point of view of library assistants, laying stress upon the obvious truth that in return for efficient service the assistant had a right to expect a reasonable remuneration. The training of the library assistant was also referred to, particularly in view of the possible establishment of one or more library schools in the near future. The opener also dealt with the desirability of affiliating with the National Association of Local Government Officers, with the position of the men returning to their libraries from their country's service, and with the question of sex equality, urging that equal services to the community should be rewarded with equal remuneration, and that sex of itself should not be a deciding factor when making any appointment. The opener concluded his paper with the following appeal to the public library assistants of the country: "Am I wrong when I say that even now probably 50 per cent. of the public library assistants of the country are outside our ranks. This ought not to be, and if our position is to be consolidated, if better conditions of service and remuneration are to be secured, it must not be. As I have already said, the L.A.A. has done good work in the past, but I believe that it has an even better and greater work to do in the immediate future, especially in the defence of our reasonable and legitimate interests.

Returning to what I ventured to indicate at the commencement of my paper, I want it to be thoroughly understood that every assistant has an increasing responsibility, not merely to his employer nor to the community at large, nor even to himself alone; every assistant, I say, has a responsibility to every other assistant, for it is often by the standard of efficiency that he himself is prepared to attain that the profession as a whole is liable to be judged.

I fear we must admit that in the past we have been unreasonable in our demands; we have cried out for better conditions, for higher remuneration, and for a higher status among the professions, but in how many cases have we been willing to do anything—or at all events not more than we have been absolutely bound to do—to raise our own personal standard of efficiency?

I recently received from a well-known librarian a letter in which—speaking particularly of the less progressive school of librarians—he characterises us as a feeble lot of people. He then goes on to say that neither does he see the men coming along in the L.A.A. for that matter. “Just one here and there, but the average is third rate. Perhaps I am mistaken in this, he says, but we shall see when this war is over.” It is up to every individual member of our Association to see to it that so far as he is concerned the indictment is wrong.

**Appointments.**—In view of the present happy condition of affairs, we sincerely hope, for obvious reasons, that library authorities will refrain for the present from filling any responsible positions. We had hoped that the Bournemouth Libraries Committee would have pursued this course, but it has appointed Miss Edith Lea, of Wigan, to the position of deputy librarian. Both Wigan and Coventry have recently advertised for temporary chief librarians. May we respectfully suggest to these authorities that it may be to their interest—as well as ours—if these appointments are deferred for, say, six months.

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#### L.A.A. ROLL OF HONOUR (continued).

\***Pte. George Massey** (Gloucestershire Regt.), of the Bingham Library, Cirencester, was wounded in the left arm last September, but we are glad to learn the wound is not serious.

\***Sgt. G. B. Smith**, of Glasgow University Library, was killed in action on 20th October, and was buried at Courtrai. His death is much regretted, particularly by his Scottish colleagues.

\* Member, L.A.A.

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#### NEW MEMBERS.

**Associate:** Miss Dorothy Mattocks, Tottenham.

**South Coast Branch.**—**Associates:** Mrs. H. D. Smith, Worthing; Misses Iris A. Turner, and Kathleen A. Hartrup, Eastbourne; Edith M. Purdue and Louisa M. Talmey, Hove; Poppie Page, Portsmouth.

**North-Western Branch:** James Cranshaw, High Street Branch Library, Bolton. **Associates:** Thomas Kirkpatrick, Blackburn; Misses Dorothy Gent, Margaret Kay, Edna Kelley, Alice E. Miller, Nellie Organ, Bessie Roscoe, Annie Thompson, Amy Wright, all of Bolton.